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UNCLAS SANAA 002836

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SUBJECT: YEMEN 2004 RAMADAN STRATEGY

REF: SECSTATE 219905

1. Per reftel, Post reports the following Ramadan programming for 2004.

2. Third Annual PD Iftar. Post,s major event was its annual Iftar dinner on 11/03. Invitees included ROYG officials, NGO heads and representatives, media and cultural contacts, as well as embassy staff. The Ambassador conveyed Ramadan greetings from the President. In light of the Iftar,s theme,"Respect for Islam in the US," an Arabic translated version of "Muslim Life in America" was also presented.

3. Embassy Iftar Dinners for the Needy. On 11/06-11/07, the Ambassador sponsored two Iftar dinners for the disenfranchised through the Sada Society, a Yemeni NGO. The Iftar dinners were billed "from the American people."

4. FSN Iftar. The FSNs sponsored a post-wide Iftar on 11/05. Several members of the embassy community fasted in a demonstration of solidarity with observing embassy staff. The FSN community provided food and entertainment in the spirit of Ramadan.

5. Ambassador's attendance at a locally hosted "diwaniya." PD is examining the possibility of the Ambassador,s attendance at a local Ramadan tent, known regionally as a "diwaniya" or "mafraj," where Yemenis gather after Iftar to listen to music and discuss the day,s events. No date has been set.

6. All PD sponsored Ramadan events emphasize respect for Islam and the Muslim people. Post will keep Department informed should additional events be planned or implemented.
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